

Development Program, which he completed in 1999.

Throughout his professional career, Mr. Taitano has worked tirelessly to improve financial practices and procedures at the organizations he has led. He held numerous financial management positions with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the U.S. Department of the Navy (DON). He previously served as the Director of the USDA Farm Service Agency's Office of Budget and Finance, Chief Financial Officer of the FSA, and Chief Financial Officer of the USDA Foreign Agriculture Service. He has also served as the Comptroller of the DON Naval Sea Systems Command's Naval Ordinance Center and as a Special Advisor for Defense Reform within the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

In 2009, Mr. Taitano was appointed the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Financial Operations with the DON's Office of the Assistant Secretary (Financial Management & Comptroller). In this capacity he was responsible for overseeing the DON's \$170 billion operating budget and exercised financial oversight for the DON's 830,000 military and civilian personnel, including over 400 support contractors.

Mr. Taitano is the recipient of the 2009 Presidential Rank Award of Meritorious Service. He has also received two DON Meritorious Civilian Service Medals, multiple USDA Farm Service Agency Administrator Honor Awards, and the USDA CFO Summit Award for the Budget and Performance Management System.

On behalf of the people of Guam and a grateful nation, I commend Mr. Dennis Taitano for his many years of dedicated service to our country. I wish him the best in his retirement.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WILDERNESS ACT

**HON. PATRICK MEEHAN**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 18, 2014*

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act.

President Johnson signed the Wilderness Act in 1964 to permanently protect some of America's most beautiful wild places. The Act has so far protected 757 wilderness areas, accounting for a total of 109 million acres.

The National Wilderness Preservation System—comprised of four federal agencies—was established to monitor and protect these untrammeled spaces. In Pennsylvania alone, the NWPS has designated more than 9,000 acres of wilderness, including the Allegheny Islands and the Hickory Creek wilderness areas. These protected lands are void of construction, roads and permanent structures. Wilderness lands are also void of any logging and mining activities.

The NWPS not only protects the resident wildlife and natural ecosystems, but it also supports outdoor recreation activities and jobs. Wilderness areas provide tremendous opportunities for hiking, camping and fishing. Yet we are just visitors to these lands.

Mr. Speaker, the Wilderness Act and the National Wilderness Preservation System have helped to protect our nation's last re-

maining unspoiled lands and waters for the past 50 years. I celebrate the Wilderness Act and look forward to the excellent work the NWPS will continue to do in the years to come.

IN RECOGNITION OF OAKLAND COUNTY COMMISSIONER MATTIE MCKINNEY HATCHETT FOR HER DECADES OF SERVICE TO THE PONTIAC COMMUNITY

**HON. GARY C. PETERS**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 18, 2014*

Mr. PETERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my dear friend, Oakland County Commissioner Mattie McKinney Hatchett, as she prepares to step down from the commission at the end of her term.

When her tenure ends in December, Commissioner Hatchett will have completed more than a decade of service to the people of Pontiac as their elected representative to the Oakland County Board of Commissioners and will end the most recent chapter in her more than five decades of public service to the City of Pontiac. In 1963, Commissioner Hatchett began serving her community as an employee and volunteer in the Pontiac Public School District. As an education professional, Commissioner Hatchett has been involved in Pontiac Public Schools for more than fifty years and currently serves as a Trustee on the Pontiac Board of Education. During her time in Pontiac Public Schools she has held a variety of positions from teacher to elementary school principal, and several high-ranking administrative roles.

Through Commissioner Hatchett's many public service endeavors in the Pontiac community, she has become a leader, mentor and passionate advocate for her constituents, friends, and neighbors. Her extensive work in the community includes service as the Chairperson of the Pontiac General Hospital Building Authority, an Oakland Livingston Human Services Agency Counselor for Youth Corp., Deputy Mayor of the City of Pontiac, and as a member of the Golden Opportunity Club. She has also been a member of many national organizations like the National Congress of Black Women and the National Baptist Congress.

In her most recent role as Oakland County Commissioner, Commissioner Hatchett has continued to be a staunch advocate for the Pontiac community. She has worked tirelessly to ensure that the voices of her constituents are heard and has been involved in finding solutions to the issues affecting them. She has been an active member of the National Association of Counties and, in 2011, was named the first African-American Woman to serve as President of the Michigan Association of Counties.

As an elected representative, I have been honored to serve the residents of Pontiac in my time as a Michigan State Senator and Member of Congress, and I have been so fortunate to have Commissioner Hatchett as a local leader with whom I have been able to work to address many issues affecting our constituents. Commissioner Hatchett's leadership has earned her countless awards and

recognition from local community organizations—she has been honored as the Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Inc. Woman of the Year, a 2014 Wonder Woman Award recipient and the 2013 IMAGE AWARD recipients from Northern Oakland County NAACP. In recognition of the profound impact Commissioner Hatchett has made on the Pontiac community, in 2008, First Lady Michelle Obama acknowledged her as the "Mother of Pontiac".

Mr. Speaker, the people of Pontiac have been so fortunate to have a passionate advocate and leader as their voice to Oakland County for the last twelve years. Commissioner Mattie McKinney Hatchett's commitment to public service and decades of engagement with Pontiac residents to find solutions for the issues affecting their city and Oakland County are an example of the important work done by our locally elected officials. I know Commissioner Hatchett's voice on the Oakland County Commission will be greatly missed by her peers and by her constituents and wish her well as she begins a new chapter in her service to the people of Pontiac.

CPB'S "AMERICAN GRADUATE: LET'S MAKE IT HAPPEN"

**HON. EARL BLUMENAUER**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 18, 2014*

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, this Saturday marks the 3rd annual "American Graduate Day," a live, public broadcasting event highlighting those working to keep America's students on the path to graduation.

Our local public broadcasting station's reporting is only the beginning of the work they do.

The American Graduate initiative, made possible with seed money from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, is the perfect example of this.

The initiative is a long-term effort by our public broadcasters to shed light on America's dropout crisis. But these efforts don't stop in the newsroom.

It's followed by local stations joining forces with over 1,000 partners and at-risk schools in their communities to find ways of meeting the initiative's goal: A 90 percent high school graduation rate in the U.S. by the year 2020.

This effort couldn't be more critical.

Each year, nearly one million students fail to graduate on time. The U.S., which once had some of the highest graduation rates of any developed country, now ranks 22nd out of 27 developed countries. That means today's generation will not be prepared for the jobs of tomorrow.

The initiative has made an impact. A study by Johns Hopkins found that American Graduate has successfully built local capacity to end the dropout crisis.

As the founder and co-chair of the Public Broadcasting Caucus, it's an honor to highlight the success of this program and the broader issue it is meaningfully addressing.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF  
DENNIS O. FREYTES

**HON. ALAN GRAYSON**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 18, 2014*

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month, to recognize Dennis Freytes. Dennis has worked and excelled in the business, government, and non-profit sectors, and as a Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army.

During his time in the Army, he was the Commander of Infantry, Special Forces, Engineer, Medical, and other units deployed worldwide on security and humanitarian missions. He served on General Staff and dealt diplomatically with over 32 countries.

Upon retiring from the Army, Dennis worked at a number of institutions and companies including BlueChip Energy/Advanced Solar Photonics, the Small Business Administration, the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research, the University of Puerto Rico, and Mathematical Policy Research.

Dennis has volunteered his time to help seniors, youth, veterans, small businesses, and state, local and national government. He is the current Vice President for the Southeast Region of the National Association for Uniformed Services. In his role as Vice President, Dennis helps to promote a strong national defense and to protect veterans' benefits. Dennis also serves as Veterans Advisor to Orange County Mayor Teresa Jacobs and as Chair of the Florida Civil Rights Association's Government Committee.

Dennis previously served as Trustee for Valencia Community College and sat on the Orange County Schools Search Committee. He also volunteered with the Citizens Commission for Children, Alliance for Children and Families, Seniors First, the United Way Board, YMCA Youth Achievers, and a number of other civic and social justice groups.

Dennis is the Founding Chairman of the Hispanic Achievers Grant Council. He has received numerous medals and awards for his outstanding military, professional, and volunteer service.

I am happy to recognize Dennis Freytes, during Hispanic Heritage Month, for his service to the United States and contributions to the Central Florida Community.

HONORING TRUDY HEALY

**HON. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM**

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 18, 2014*

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Trudy Healy; a woman of remarkable talents who has an unwavering commitment to preserving water quality in our great State of New Mexico.

From an early age, Trudy proved to be curious and passionate about her surroundings. She was gifted with a virtuous heart, and immersed herself in every aspect of her community in Taos, New Mexico. Her mother, Mercedes Gonzales Valerio, was her trusted friend and confidant whom Trudy loved dearly.

Trudy would tell others that her creativity stemmed from her mother, who surrounded herself with artists, instilling in her daughter a deep appreciation for art.

Her father was Juan I. Valerio, a two-term County Commissioner for Taos, and a well-respected man who was revered for his generosity and service to his community. He also proudly served as the "acequia mayordomo" or "ditch boss" and he taught his daughter how to farm, irrigate, appreciate water, and recognize the vitality it brings to a community. Trudy would carry these values with her throughout her entire life.

Trudy and her husband, Edmund Healy, would go on to found the Healy Foundation to focus on land and water issues and projects that promote healthy New Mexico communities. Through their foundation Trudy and Edmund have built partnerships with local, state and federal entities to generate funding for land and water projects in New Mexico and invested in courses at New Mexico State University for regulators and inspectors. They also contributed to the film "The Water Haulers," spurring swift approval of the Navajo-Gallup water project in Congress. The project helped make clean water available to more than 240,000 residents.

In 2001, Governor Bill Richardson appointed Trudy to the Water Trust Board and was elected its Treasurer. Her involvement had an immediate effect. As the proud founder of the Acequia Project Fund for the Water Trust Fund, Trudy championed a holistic approach to water issues and fought to ensure the prosperity of underrepresented rural communities in New Mexico. Trudy understands the connection between water and people; what it means for survival, economic livelihood, and cultural heritage.

It is astonishing to think of all that Trudy has accomplished and fulfilled in her life: a horseback rider, successful art gallery owner and connoisseur, folk singer, guitar player, film writer, avid rancher, passionate water advocate, loving mother and proud wife to name a few. Her zest for life is endless and if you talked to anyone who knows her, they would tell you that water is her true passion. I look forward to continuing to work with Trudy on the important water issues facing our state and country and would like to take this moment to recognize all that she has done for New Mexico.

RECOGNIZING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GREATER PENSACOLA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**HON. JEFF MILLER**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 18, 2014*

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 125th anniversary of the Greater Pensacola Chamber of Commerce. All across our Nation, local Chambers of Commerce play vital roles in supporting economic growth and development throughout their communities, and the Greater Pensacola Chamber of Commerce exemplifies this proud tradition.

The Greater Pensacola Chamber of Commerce's impressive history dates back 125 years to its first meeting on September 16, 1889, where a small group of business lead-

ers got together at the Pensacola Opera House to form the Pensacola Chamber of Commerce. At their first meeting, they elected the Pensacola-area railroad magnate and future State Senator, William Dudley Chipley to serve as their first Chairman. The Chamber represented a wide variety of professions and local businesses, and it quickly proved its worth to the community, helping to grow the Port of Pensacola into the largest in Florida by 1900. Thanks to this prosperity and the tireless work of the Chamber, many new and important corporations were started in the Pensacola area.

By the turn of the century, the Chamber had also established a strong military affairs component, linking the Pensacola-area business community to Northwest Florida's growing military installations. In fact, the Chamber's leadership helped lobby for new defense activities during the 1898 Spanish-American War. Over the years, the Chamber has served as a key component driving Pensacola's transition from a small Navy Yard to the Cradle of Naval Aviation.

Meanwhile, during the early 20th century, the Chamber also brought together the business community and local city and county officials to help upgrade Pensacola's local infrastructure to meet the needs of a growing population and economy. Thanks to the work of the Chamber, local leaders, and the broader Pensacola community, the entire Pensacola area grew from a small town with no paved roads and few utilities to a world-class city that is home to tens of thousands of residents, countless successful businesses, and millions of visitors each year.

Over the years, the Greater Pensacola Chamber of Commerce has grown with the surrounding Pensacola community. From its humble beginnings 125 years ago, as a small group of civic leaders with no full-time staff, the Chamber has grown immensely and today the Greater Pensacola Chamber of Commerce represents more than 1,200 members working on a daily basis to help bring world-class economic development projects to benefit Northwest Florida's businesses and citizens.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress I am proud to congratulate the Greater Pensacola Chamber of Commerce on its incredibly successful 125-year history and look forward to another 125 years of success and prosperity.

HONORING MICHELLE SCULLY

**HON. JOHN GARAMENDI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 18, 2014*

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following:

Michelle Scully (Educator, agriculture and economic development advocate; Lake County): Michelle has a 20-year history of service to Lake County, particularly in the areas of education, agriculture, and economic development. When Michelle and her husband relocated to Lake County as he went to work in the family's pear packing and farming businesses, she quickly immersed herself in community activities. She was appointed to an advisory board tasked with researching the divisive issue of genetically modified crops. She also served on the steering committee that developed Lake County